

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 184

Introduced by Assembly Member Arambula

May 10, 2016

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 184—Relative to Portuguese National Heritage Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 184, as introduced, Arambula. Portuguese National Heritage Month.

This bill would recognize the month of June 2016 as Portuguese National Heritage Month.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, In September of 1542, Portuguese explorer Juan
2 Rodriguez Cabrillo sailed a ship into San Diego Bay and became
3 the first European to explore the land now known as California.
4 Cabrillo explored the California coast, and is credited with
5 numerous coastal discoveries; and

6 WHEREAS, The first Portuguese settlers came to California
7 from the Azores Islands in the early 19th century. The largest wave
8 of Azorean immigrants moved to California just before and after
9 the turn of the 20th century. Each wave contributed substantially
10 to setting up agricultural operations, especially dairy, vegetable,
11 and fruit farms; and

12 WHEREAS, Throughout most of the 20th century, as many as
13 one-half of all Portuguese Californians owned or operated a dairy
14 farm, worked on a dairy farm, or worked in a dairy-related industry.
15 Applying the Portuguese belief in hard work and thriftiness, along

1 with additional labor from family members, a Portuguese settler
2 could earn enough to reinvest in his business, and buy more land
3 and cattle; and

4 WHEREAS, Historically, California has been a popular
5 destination for immigrants from the Azores Islands, creating strong
6 cultural ties between the two regions; currently there are over
7 381,000 persons of Portuguese heritage living in California,
8 approximately 90 percent of whom have either come directly from
9 the Azores Islands or are of Azorean parentage; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1979, the Center for Portuguese Studies at the
11 University of California, Santa Barbara, was founded for the
12 purpose of promoting and developing Portuguese studies in
13 California and in the United States; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1994, the University of California, Berkeley,
15 established The Portuguese Studies Program. Included among the
16 many goals of the program is the goal “to spotlight the crucial and
17 complex but often overlooked experience and contributions of the
18 Portuguese-American community”; and

19 WHEREAS, In 1999, the Center for Portuguese Studies at the
20 California State University, Stanislaus, was established to promote
21 the study of the Portuguese-speaking world’s language, history,
22 culture, and influence. The Center works to enrich the connections
23 between the local Portuguese community and its cultural and
24 linguistic heritage and to forge new connections between countries
25 of the Portuguese-speaking world and California’s central valley;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, Among the great Portuguese Americans who have
28 contributed significantly to this country are: composer John Philip
29 Sousa, best known for composing “Stars and Stripes Forever”;
30 poet Emma Lazarus, best known for her sonnet about the Statue
31 of Liberty, “The New Colossus”; architect William L. Pereira, best
32 known for designing the Transamerica Pyramid in San Francisco;
33 and singer and actress Carmen Miranda. Many Portuguese
34 Americans have also served with distinction in local, state, and
35 federal office, and have served proudly in this country’s military;
36 and

37 WHEREAS, Portuguese Americans have made valuable and
38 substantial contributions to every facet of California life including
39 the entertainment industry, the most notable of whom are Mary
40 Astor, Tom Hanks, Joe Perry, and James Franco; and

1 WHEREAS, Portuguese Americans continue to thrive in
2 agricultural communities of the San Joaquin Valley, including
3 Hanford and Lemoore in Kings County and Shafter, Wasco, and
4 Bakersfield in Kern County; they have contributed greatly to
5 making market milk the leading agricultural product by value in
6 both Kings and Kern Counties; and

7 WHEREAS, The Portuguese Heritage Society of California
8 built the Portuguese Historical Museum to serve as a center for
9 the display of Portuguese heritage and culture. In addition to its
10 permanent exhibits, it will house and host exhibits and cultural
11 programs from various organizations and the many Portuguese
12 communities in the United States and around the world; and

13 WHEREAS, The Portuguese Heritage Society of California
14 designated the second Saturday of June as a day to celebrate
15 Portuguese culture through music, dance, art, cooking, parades,
16 and other festivities; now, therefore, be it

17 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
18 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby declares the month
19 of June 2016 as Portuguese National Heritage Month; and be it
20 further

21 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
22 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.